

PSC-ED-OUS

Moderator: Emmanuel Caudillo
July 15, 2015
1:00 pm CT

Coordinator: Welcome and thank you for standing by. At this time, all participants will be on a listen-only mode until the Q&A session of today's conference. At a time to ask a question, press star 1 on your touch-tone phone and record your name.

This call is being recorded. If you have any objections, please disconnect at this time. I would like to turn the call over to your host, Ms. Alejandra Ceja. Ma'am, you may begin.

Alejandra Ceja: Thank you so much. Welcome everyone. My name is Alejandra Ceja. I'm the Executive Director of the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics. I'm joined by several of my colleagues here at the Initiative. So I want to thank you all for joining us for today's very exciting webinar.

Two quick business matters. I want to make sure to let you all know that this webinar is off the record and not intended for press purposes. I also would like to let you know that this webinar, including the Q&A, will be recorded. And the recording and transcript, along with the slide presentation, is going to be posted on our Web site after the call. This will give people an opportunity to

make sure that we can also share the information with those that were not able to join us.

The agenda will proceed as follows. I will describe today's webinar's topic briefly. And then I'll introduce you all to our first presenter. Our first presenter will have up to 15 minutes. And then we will have 15 minutes set aside for question-and-answer.

Then I will introduce our second presenter who will also speak for up to 15 minutes, followed by a question-and-answer session. We're going to open the floor up for questions. The operator will come on and provide guidance on how you all can get into the queue for questions.

So now onto our discussion for today that's focused on early learning. As many of you know, there has been a surge of evidence demonstrating the benefits of investing in high-quality early learning and the huge unmet need, especially as it relates to the Hispanic community.

This fall, in 18 states, 33,000 additional children from low- and moderate-income families will start school for the first time in high-quality early learning programs through preschool development grants that were funded last Congress.

And as part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act also known as No Child Left Behind, all of this is being debated. We recognize that we must continue to do more to ensure that we continue to invest in early learning as a priority, especially for our Hispanic community.

We know that there are several programs and strategies already working for our Latino infants and young children. And we're hoping to strengthen the

foundation for our children to develop and be the future leaders of our country.

Today we will hear about the administration's efforts on early learning, and then we will learn about some of the efforts on the ground to increase early learning access that is currently being implemented.

So without further ado, I'm going to turn it over to my colleague and our first presenter, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and Early Learning, Libby Doggett. Libby?

Libby Doggett: Thank you, Alejandra, and thanks to all the White House Initiative for Educational Excellence for Hispanics, your staff, (Marimel), (Marco) and your wonderful advisory board members, particularly led by my friend from Texas, (Nell) from Austin.

I'm delighted to present to you about early learning from an administration perspective. And when you look at the first slide, if you'll go there, you'll see there are a couple of things I want to talk about.

One is I want to talk about the national vision for early learning. Then I want to talk about, touch on the research. Teaching is complicated. I want to talk a little bit about that and then tell you about early learning programs we have here at Ed and how we're trying to move from K-12 to P-14 that we want people to start thinking in those terms. And then there's so much exciting work going on in cities and states; I want to touch on that.

As you'll see, I'm not talking about the Hispanic community. I'm not talking about dual language learners because, truthfully, it used to be that these children were a subset. They are now are children.

And what effects - our dual language learners, our children who don't speak Spanish or Hispanic - I mean who don't speak English, our Hispanic families, our families from other countries, it's about all kids.

So I will work in some of the research and talk about it. But I want to integrate it because that's the truth of where we want to be. We want to be and to have an integrated system where all children get their needs met. So if we look at the next slide, please?

The president is leading this effort. Two-and-a-half years ago, at his State of the Union, he announced his early learning vision. It's a comprehensive approach. It includes home visiting. It includes increasing the quality of head start, an early head start in child care partnerships for infant/toddler care and includes pre-K for every child at 200% of poverty, every four-year-old.

It's a partnership with states. We've made some small steps forward on this. Actually today, on the Senate floor, Senator Casey is introducing an amendment that has many of the pieces of the president's agenda that would be a part of ESEA if it were incorporated.

The president's vision is driving what we're doing but it's also driving what's happening in the states. And when I get to the part about states, you'll see that it's synergistic, that we've done work on the federal level but the states didn't do a whole lot of work; and then we do more; and then they do more. So it's been a wonderful vision that has driven us and we really appreciate all of the president's understanding and support in this area.

The next slide shows actually that it's the research that's driving this, that its children from the lower-income brackets that have - are having more trouble. And achievement gap really emerges early, as early as age 2.

You'll see here the welfare parent line, the working class and the college-educated parents. The children in those families just hear a completely different amount of words.

And we all know that language which is the basis for so much of what we do is developed by hearing the language. So the more vocabulary words the child hears, the bigger their vocabulary is.

And we really need to address this gap, this gap and the research around it, as well as the other researches to show that when you provide high-quality services to children early on, it reaps benefits later.

Children enter school more prepared. They do better on kindergarten entry assessments. They do better on the third-grade reading tests. They're less likely to go into special education or be held back a year. They're more likely to graduate, go onto a two- and four-year college, get a degree and become tax-paying citizens.

And the research is 40 years old. So we know this very clearly and now we just need to act on that research. Many other countries are acting on it. It's time our country act on it as well.

The next slide really describes kind of what we want. And if you go ahead and click through that slide, it will show you the different pieces. We want to see these components in a high-quality classroom.

We want to see talking and listening. We want to see reading, and math, and science, and art and music. We want to see children making choices; a rich selection of activities, not just one or two things for kids to do.

We want to see lots of use of technology because that is the future. We want to see lots of emphasis on social and emotional development because we know now that those are the skills that children seem to really keep and they guide their future learning academically.

Families, of course, are critically important, and they must be engaged all along the way, not just in early childhood but in elementary and secondary school as well.

So you'll see that the components of describing a great classroom are very much play-based but it's also very intentional. And this is particularly true for Hispanic families who want to see these children getting a rich array of services.

We don't want to just see them concentrating on reading or on math. We want them to develop their art and their music and their science because that's the way young children learn. We don't want to see too much didactic learning but we want to see lots of creativity and choices. If you'd go into a classroom, you'll see that, actually, it looks like kids are playing and they are but it's played toward an end.

If you take a look at the next slide, I had to put this in, this is actually my niece. And she's not in a center right now. She does go to a preschool program. But you can just see the complication of the concentration.

See that she's dressed. She's balancing there on a chair. I don't know if I would have let her do that. But the complicated block structures she's building; think of the learning that's occurring in that.

When you think about early childhood, I want you to kind of have that vision of those are the rich kind of activities we want children engaged in and lots of language in English and Spanish both occurring all along the way.

Next slide shows you the challenge we have. This is a map of the United States. And just looking at it, you'll see that the darker states, like Wisconsin, and Florida, and West Virginia, and Vermont, and Oklahoma are states that are serving the greatest percentage of their four-year-olds. And the states that are absolutely white are not providing any state-supported services for four-year-olds.

So you can see we have a challenge here because we have some states - there's a great variety among states. You can live in Texas and maybe get some services. And then you move across to New Mexico and there aren't as many services. Or you're in Oklahoma where there are a ton of services; there's a program for every four-year-old. And you move across the state to Missouri where it might be very difficult to get a pre-K.

Fortunately, in certain states where we have lots of Hispanics, we have some pretty good programs. The problem is the quality. And some of the items that I had in the other slide, you won't see in the classrooms. So they may not be high-quality or, in worst case scenarios, there may not be any program at all.

So we have a challenge. We need more programs for all children. We need more states supporting it. We also need more money at the federal level, as well as even at the local level.

The next slide shows you a little bit about where we are with the Department of Education. We are proud that, based on the president's agenda, we have put some programs in place.

We're building toward a \$2 billion investment. We have \$1 billion invested in 20 states. Those are the gray states on the map. And those states are spending money to build the system.

Their early childhood is complicated because it's not just school. It's head start. It includes childcare programs and it includes school-based programs. So states are struggling with how do we pull this in together into a system that meets the needs of all families? And those 20 states, with our billion dollars, are doing a terrific job of building that system.

They're also working -- and I'll talk a little bit more about this in a little while -- to build a competent workforce. If you teach in childcare, you don't necessarily have to have a degree or very much training.

But if you decide you want - you love this field of early learning and you want to go to head start, you have to go back and get an associate degree, and then, actually, a BA degree. If you want to teach in public schools, you probably have to have a BA degree.

We want to make that system of working through that framework, that career ladder more seamless, so that we can keep the wonderful diversity. We need diversity in the workforce. In early childhood, we have good diversity.

If you look across programs, we have more Hispanic teachers, more bilingual teachers, more African-American teachers in early learning than we do in the

K-12 system. And we'd like to be able to keep that and help the people in the system get their degrees.

So the gray states, those are our Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge states. They're doing a good job in pulling the other systems, pulling together a professional development system, working more closely with parents to make sure they understand and have the services they need, working with the healthcare system as well.

The blue states are pretty exciting. Alejandra mentioned that, in the fall, 33,000 four-year-olds are going to go to pre-K for the first time. And they're going to be in these 18 states. These are our preschool development states. And this is a program for a four-year-old.

It's pretty exciting because these states are focusing on their high-need communities. And we know that when we mention high-need communities that means the Latino families living in those communities whose children can benefit so much from a year or two of pre-K. So those states are putting in place pre-K programs to four-year-olds.

And the purple states are kind of outstanding states because they have actually both Race to the Top and Preschool Development money. And so they're able to not only build a good system but they're also able to build the programs that will make that system even stronger.

So we have a number of standouts there. And particularly, like in Illinois, we know there are a lot of Latino families that can benefit from services. So they should be more readily available in a state that has both Race to the Top and Preschool Development Grants.

The next slide shows us - shows you what we're trying to do here at the Department of Education. We used to talk about K-12. K-12 this; we want to do this in K-12. We're trying to build a system that's P-14 that starts in preschool or even prenatally and goes through at least two years of community college.

And so our goal in the Department of Education has been to integrate early learning into all aspects of our work but not have it be a stand-alone. And that's what I'd like to see actually with Latino families. I want to make sure that everybody, in every department here, is thinking about what are we going to do about our Latino families?

These children come in. They need both English and Spanish. They're learning both languages. Well how can we do that? These children come in with incredible social skills. What are we going to do to build on that? We could be coming with families that are very eager for education and want to be involved. How can we make sure that we involve them in a way that's appropriate?

So, at the department, where I won't mention all of these, but we obviously have integrated into Race to the Top, by having Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge. We have - we're looking at ESEA, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. We're trying to integrate preschool more into Title I, Title II and Title III.

We have a new school turnaround model that includes preschool to third grade. We have enhanced the assessment grants around early learning that will include a kindergarten entry assessment, as well as other formative assessments which will help teachers know where to begin their teaching.

If you look at the Institute for Education Sciences, at their research agenda, you will see that they're very much focused on early learning. So we've tried it here at the department. And we love all of your help, moving from a K-12 to a pre-K, our P-14 system around the country.

On the next slide, I just wanted to point out the quality standards. We haven't talked as much about quality but we know that quality is critically important. And with the Preschool Development Grants, we have 12 quality standards. And we want these to be the standard in every state. I won't go over all of these either but I just want to mention a couple of key ones.

One is we have to have staff that are really well qualified. And if people are in the field now and they don't have a degree, we want to help them get it because we want to keep people in the field. But we do think that a college education, a BA degree is critical for anyone working in early learning.

We want those teachers paid the same as a K-12 staff. We want those salaries commensurate, so they're not leaving pre-K to go teach first- and second-grade where they can be paid better. We want them paid well.

We want low ratio. We don't want any more than ten to one. We want a class size of no more than 20. And we want children with disabilities included. We want developmentally-appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive instructions.

And that means that we want people to understand how children who don't speak English as their first language learn and find ways to build up their first language while we're teaching them a second language. So I just wanted to make sure you all have those 12 quality standards because we're hoping those will drive what's happening around the country.

And then the next slide, really, complements what you're doing because states are doing incredible work of moving ahead. I've just updated this slide because we've had a great year in early learning.

You can see that we got \$10 million more in Alabama. California put in over \$300 million. It's not just for preschool. It's for the whole early learning continuum which we think is important.

Minnesota put in \$95 million. North Dakota, a state that in most of my map is white, is now going to start a small program with \$3 million. They say it's going to serve about a third of their four-year-olds. We're excited to have a new state join the many number of states that are already there.

And then my home state of Texas, we have \$130 million added back in. We lost some money a few years ago. We're now starting to build back up to our state's - in our state's pre-K program.

And then, finally, I'll point out that Washington State had a great year and appropriated \$98 million to expand not just preschool but their whole early learning continuum.

So it was a great year in the states. There are other states that have done well. We need to continue to build the state programs because, in education, much of the money comes from states. And states need to be sure they're putting up their fair share.

And then my next to the last slide is about what cities are doing. And if you'll pull that up, it's pretty exciting. I think mayors have realized that some of the gains, the economic gains, particularly in early learning, come to them, come

back in savings, in (crime), more - a better trained workforce. So a number of cities have gotten involved, either by partnering with a school district or actually putting up money on their own.

So, last year, we had a fight between the mayor of New York and the governor of New York about who is going to pay for the pre-K program that the mayor desperately wanted. But we all won because they put 20,000 new seats in place in that city in less than a year, and are moving toward pre-K for every four-year-old in New York; in New York City, particularly.

We have San Antonio where the voters passed an initiative to tax themselves, one-eighth of a cent, so they would have more money for early learning and established four really beautiful and cutting-edge early learning facilities around the city.

And then we have Seattle that recently passed a ballot initiative where they're going to be working on this. There are many other states and cities that are doing wonderful things.

In Cleveland, we have a new initiative headed up by the business community, the foundation community, the advocate and the early learning providers called PRE4CLE where they're going to provide pre-K for four-year-olds.

In my home city of Austin, I'm very proud that we have a pilot program working with three-year-olds and putting more three-year-olds in programs. And then in Dallas, also in Texas, they're doing just a terrific job of improving the quality of the programs they have and then figuring out how they can start serving three-year-olds and more four - making sure that all four-year-olds are in programs.

So that's kind of an overview of where we are at the national, state and local level. I appreciate all that you all are doing and welcome any questions.

Coordinator: Thank you. At this time, we will begin the Q&A session. To ask a question, you may press star 1 on your touch-tone phone. Please unmute your phone and record your first and last name clearly when prompted. To withdraw your question, please press star 2. One moment for our first question. We have a question in queue from (Luz Mercado). Ma'am, your line is open. Go ahead. Ms. (Mercado)?

(Luz Mercado): Yes?

Coordinator: Your line is open. Go ahead. You can ask questions now, ma'am.

(Luz Mercado): No. Not right now.

Coordinator: Okay. One moment, please, for our next question. The question is from Dr. (Loshadel). Sir, your line is open.

Man: Thank you. Good afternoon, Libby. How are you?

Libby Doggett: I'm fine.

Man: Good. I just wanted to say thank you so much because it's the first time we're going to be able to offer a full-day preschool program, at (Taylor) School. So the whole community and the school community are very excited. So we're very grateful for having that happen.

And then my second question is, is there any kind of possibility to offer these preschool programs afterschool? Are there any grants that are available to do

that? It's because - I guess the community is really excited about the opportunity to have their children with a preschool program, especially in a highly Latino community.

Libby Doggett: We are so glad that you're excited about it. And we hope that you'll publicize a lot about how successful it is and make sure that the whole community knows about it so that we can get more funding in the future.

In terms of afterschool, we know that's a critical need, not just for preschool but for kindergarten, for our second and third graders, even for middle schoolers. We know that families have most - both parents generally working and we want kids in a safe and learning environment.

Many communities are using childcare money to supplement the preschool money to provide that. We have the 21st-century program here at the Department. But we all know that we need more money to fund those afterschool programs. And we'd love to work with you to try and figure that out.

Man: Thank you so much. I'll send you an e-mail. And thank you so much for the administration. And also, (unintelligible) the president for your leadership that you have with early childhood.

Libby Doggett: Thank you.

Coordinator: Thank you. Next question is from (Linda Stubits). Ma'am, your line is open.

(Linda Stubits): Okay. Thank you. Good afternoon, Libby. This is (Linda Stubits) and I'm with DeSales University. I have been in education for a number of years; a retired administrator from public school education of Pennsylvania.

A couple of questions; there are several individuals that I have talked to, that have been in education, that would like to possibly start up their own preschool environments. Now is there money available for startups somewhat and in entrepreneur setting or are there only these grants that are available for them to do that?

Libby Doggett: Well, unfortunately, we only have the grants available from - out of the Office of Early Learning. But we have worked - and one of the points I didn't have on my slide, we have worked with a charter school office here and have made sure that, in many states, the charter school money can be used for preschool.

So, you know, I would look in your state, is it possible to start a charter school for preschool? And then, you know, I'd go to your district. They're looking for amazing people like you who have - and a career that spans decades and deep experience to help them.

I think if anyone is in early learning, they're going to be busy in the next few years because we're going to need every single person stepping up to do more. So, you know, we'd love to talk to you offline about maybe how you could do that. But I don't - I think it's going to be more with local or state money rather than federal money.

(Linda Stubits): Now to talk offline about some - and I have several others -- because I don't want to take up everyone's time at this point in time -- related to preschool. Is there a number I can call to talk offline with you or someone relative to some of the pressing issues, you know, here in Pennsylvania that we have, both at the teacher preparation level, for preschool teachers, and also in establishing quality preschools in Pennsylvania. Is there someone I could talk to?

Libby Doggett: The best way to reach me is look at the slide in front of you and it has my e-mail address. And that's good because I can do it night and day, early and late, and it's a better way to reach me than by phone.

I do - you did mention professional development. Now I want to mention the National Academy of Science's recent report on transforming the workforce that I really recommend everybody to get a hold of.

And you can get it available - it's available at the institute for - IOM, the Institute of Medicine Web site. It's transforming the workforce or the birth to (eight) workforce. It really is great and does talk about all the needs that we have in the college level.

We've also committed with our Office of the English Language Acquisition and HHS funding at the National Academies to do a similar study on English language learners starting at birth. And so we're really...

(Linda Stubits): That would be great because that's a big program for us right here at DeSales University, the English Language Acquisition; ELL, English language learners. So that's great. So I will get in touch with you. And I joined a little bit late. Will we be able to get a copy of these slides, the presentation?

Libby Doggett: Yes. The slides will be on our Web site. And then we'll also have the audio portion available as well.

(Linda Stubits): Okay. That's great. Thank you.

Libby Doggett: Operator, do we have one more question?

Coordinator: Yes. We do have a question from Laurie Walters. Ma'am, your line is open.

Laurie Walters: Hi. This is Laurie Walters and I'm a teacher at Los Angeles Unified School District. And I was just wondering if you could give me a resource to look up grants or writing, to get funding for early ed programs, and in terms of parents and working with them and their children.

Libby Doggett: I don't have a ready list of resources. I do know that there are not as many resources at the federal level as people would think. We do have the i3 program which is the innovation in the education program that has funded some wonderful interventions for families, for early learning, for Hispanic children that, you know, if you have a good idea, I would look there.

But you can also send me an e-mail and I can get someone to do a little bit more research on this. So thank you for what you're doing in LA. And I'm looking forward to hearing my colleague, Celia Ayala, in just a minute.

Laurie Walters: Thank you very much, Libby.

Alejandra Ceja: So thank you, everyone. You're now going to hear from our second presenter. If you still have a question for Libby that you weren't able to ask, please feel free to send us an e-mail at WHIEEH@ed.gov.

This is the same e-mail address that you used to register for the webinar. And we will make sure that it gets to her office. And, as she mentioned, her presentation also does provide her contact information. We're now going to move onto our second presenter, Ms. Celia Ayala, CEO of LAUP. Celia, we'll turn it over to you.

Celia Ayala: Yes. Thank you so much. And good morning to some and good afternoon to others. It's a privilege and a great opportunity for us to really, from coast to

coast, talk about the importance of early kinder in education. I have been privileged to work with LAUP, a nonprofit organization that was established over ten years ago with tobacco tax money.

So if you look at the first slide, LAUP is an organization that - whose mission is to really look at the whole child. And originally we were established to prepare children for kindergarten, with tobacco tax by First 5 LA, one of the (unintelligible) commissions in the State of California.

And the target was if there was one thing that could be done to improve the kinder readiness of children, what could we do? And they identified the possibility of providing high-quality preschool programs for as many four-year-olds, that it would be possible.

We were a startup organization. I know we had a caller earlier about startups. And we were a startup organization in 2005. And we were established as a separate entity who do feels differently, to have, in a sense, no excuses, no bureaucracies, no - we don't have the dollars. But we started with 100 providers literally selected in a (lottery mode).

We, in the County of Los Angeles, have 10 million people. We have five supervisorial districts. We have currently over 750,000 zero-to-five children; about 100 or so thousand four-year-olds given in any one year.

So the original network for LAUP was 100 providers and we were going to serve 2800 or so children. The majority of those providers were existing providers that were either (state) preschools or head start programs or nonprofit organizations, and about 40% were brand-new where we actually had First 5 dollars that allowed for facility buildup.

And then the focus was on a star-rated program that was going to be looking at rating programs based on the quality and certification of their teachers, their student-child ratio, their (eckers) at the time it was just an environmental rating scale, and parental engagement.

(Hence then), as you can see in the graph, over time, in a ten-year period, we now have 300 LAUP providers where we either fund fully with the First 5 LA dollars and or partially almost 11,000 children with 300 providers all over the county.

And the unique part about LAUP is that it's truly a mixed model delivery system where we have nonprofit, for-profit, public, private, center-based and home-based programs.

And we, in addition, have been privileged to be one of the few states to get an Early Challenge grant that this is our third year of participating in the Race to the Top, with 15 other counties in the State of California, that we are now privileged to serve an additional 230 RTT providers with almost 9000 children.

So we have a network in all the communities in LA County, from far north in Lancaster, border to (Kern County) to Long Beach, from Santa Monica to Pomona, and anywhere in between.

So LAUP is an organization that's been around and we having had the privilege of having sufficient resources to fund a quality rating and improvement system, which is really a privilege and that we funded our providers, over 300, based on their quality.

The Race to the Top providers were existing providers. And this is to me just amazing that these providers are not getting additional dollars in terms of their funding but they are the existing head starts, early head starts, programs that are funded with other funding sources but they want improve the quality of their program.

So with the Race to the Top and First 5 California, a signature program three years ago, we went beyond just serving four-year-olds and four-year-old providers. We are now working with a zero-to-five population.

And many of our providers that are LAUP also serve infants and toddlers. But our biggest push came with the Early Challenge grant, with the Race to the Top providers, to go out and improve regardless of what (zip code), the quality of the early care and early education program. So we are really excited that we've had this opportunity and some experiences and lessons learned where we now have an LAUP community.

So our next slide talks about our LAUP community. And it really includes - or we started with preschoolers but we now have infants/toddlers. We have parental engagement. The parents are the first and most important teachers of their children.

And, by parents, we also incorporate the family because, in many cases, it's grandparents caring for the children or foster parents. But we also incorporate our ECE adult student because we have a workforce initiative that is about improving wherever they are at, whether they have their permit, they want to pursue a BA, they want to pursue an MA, or even a doctoral degree.

And we're working with our local community colleges, with our universities. We're working with our research and referral networks, with the Office of

Child Care, the LA County Office of Education, to ensure that everybody is coming together and looking at the ECE workforce, about caring for our children, but in the ECE education.

And as Libby mentioned earlier, the people who do this, do this for a passion. So they may start caring for their own or other children and soon begin to pursue a career. And we have family-based preschool programs or infant and toddler programs that I would put my own, I don't have children now.

But if I had grandchildren, I would put them in a family-based (homes) because they are just as high-quality as (a Y) or as a school district as it relates to comparing them for kindergarten.

We, in LA County, as I mentioned, are a huge county. I mean we're bigger than some states, as you know. Ten million people, that's a lot of people; 750,000 zero-to-five children. And, in LA County, our diversity is great. We have over 144 languages spoken in LA County. The majority of our population though is Hispanic.

So we have 62% of those zero-to-five children that are Hispanic; the majority of them are Spanish-speaking only. And we're also privileged to say that about 60% of our ECE workforce in our LAUP program are also Hispanic and/or bilingual.

We also have some communities that have bilingual programs, not only in Spanish-English, but Korean, Armenian, Chinese, and we have actually a program in the northern valley that is a Russian-English, and you could hear Spanish in those classrooms.

Four-year-olds are just amazing because we know that children can learn more than one language. And we want to make sure; that, one, our programs are culturally and linguistically sensitive; that, two, it is important that we address our ethnicity and our cultural differences as something that is a value-add. And that's taking (away) from our programs.

So we have a host of workshops and training sessions that we provide and community events for our parents to ensure that we are getting resources and information out.

There are partners in this endeavor. It's not about LAUP, but it's about everyone that I mentioned, starting from our primary funder, First 5 LA, with a (feature) from LAUSD. There's one Web site that you can look for additional resources. But to our research and referral, to our county's Office of Education and our Office of Child Care, we are really creating an ECE coalition.

In our next slide, you see our programs. And we started primarily, as I said earlier, with a four-year-old program. And we were privileged that we had quality coaching from Day 1.

We also had fiscal coaching for many of our nonprofit, small organizations and/or family-based programs. We've really brought them along because it became an opportunity for small businesses to grow in communities throughout LA County.

The majority of our workforce are women. And we do have small businesses that are owned by families. Husband and wife decided to open up their home and become a home-based. But they didn't know how to do a spread sheet that

would incorporate taxes and assessments and fees, et cetera. So we've had a coaching model.

With First 5 LA, there's always been First 5 California that's been of a parallel track. And the First 5 California has always been about improving the quality of preschool programs in those recent years, as I mentioned, to improve the quality of infant and toddler programs.

So the signature program is a program that First 5 California has funded LAUP on top of our First 5 LA to provide even additional resources to our parents.

So it's a little bit like a head start program where we have mental health specialists; health providers; parents of more than just what parents can do for their children as an extension on their preschool or infant and toddler program; and what can we do for parents who get them to learn English, or to get their GED, or to have some training programs for parents. This is how we change communities, by changing how families really see themselves and become more engaged in the community.

Our Race to the Top program really allows for us to (serve) even more providers and more children, improving the quality of their program. And as I mentioned, these are the people who came out and said, "I want to improve the quality of my program but I don't have the resources, or the substitute pay, or to purchase materials."

So the (incentiving) has been similar to our network with (LAUP), funded by First 5. We provide coaching. We also provide professional development opportunities. We provide incentives in terms of materials that would look at - and we assess and we provide them with a tier in terms of our quality rating

and improvement system that they might need additional playground materials or social and emotional resources for the classroom and the teacher and/or the family.

So the Race to the Top has been a way to really improve the quality and really minimal expenditure because we wish we have and need more money. But with the dollars that we've been given by the Department of Education, we have made tremendous difference and more programs in LA County.

We (then) have this privilege that through primarily First 5 LA, and then First 5 California, we have a workforce consortium, where we have provided (stipends) for staff members who pursue education.

We have provided course work and an alignment with between community colleges - and community colleges to the (CSU) systems, so that providers that are pursuing a career and those of you that (I know) have gone to college and/or have such children. It's a little more difficult to maneuver for your children.

What courses are applicable and acceptable and transferable from one community college -- East LA College through LA City College, and then transfer to either Cal State (unintelligible) or Cal State LA -- that has been just an amazing systemic change, that we've been able to make a big (dent on), and we're continuing to work on that.

Our parent engagement specialists work with those - our Race to the Top, our LAUP network, and have really made a difference in terms of working not just with our parents but working with providers.

We'll give them more tools and skills and how to engage the families in their local site because LAUP is a resource. We are not necessarily a direct service provider. We provide direct services that relate to the technical assistance and support.

But we want to make sure that there's capacity building at every site, and that the resources that we're garnering -- local, state and federal -- make a difference, and that that stays behind it, every local community.

And so, from our programs that we've had thus far, the last for that uses our parent ambassadors. Our parent ambassador programs are just like the most amazing people in the world because they have become so convinced, and especially those parents that have older children that are now in high school but they now have children that are in third grade and they see the difference.

They - no script. And they share their stories locally, with our local elected officials or potential funders. They - and at the national level. And they have some amazing stories.

And they - not only are they assisting their children in terms of that extension from infant, toddler, preschool program to (unintelligible), but now maybe someone advocate for their children but also for their children who's in their community because they know how important all of this is.

So the last program that is not - one that is different, but most recently with the additional dollars to influx that into the California state budget, there is a quality rating and improvement systems (unintelligible) grant that has given dollars (unintelligible). It started with the original target of the Race to the Top for the Office of Child Care and LAUP.

We're one of 16 grantees and we then established a larger coalition bringing LA County Office of Education as the largest (unintelligible) in the county, with support of First 5 LA, and with support of the Local Planning Council and the Resource and Referral Alliance, who really look at bringing into a group, quality for all of our state preschool programs.

So it's not (unintelligible) dollar but its quality improvement for assessment, technical assistance and training to our program. So I'm going to go past this because I know we have so many but it's still important to note that maybe that it is becoming a national reform effort. And so it's great to see that some states are finally getting a hold of what we need to do, (unintelligible) about the future of our cities, our states and our nation.

In our quality-child outcome, I can share with you that we are so proud that after ten years we have learned a lot. And that our children, our participants in our LAUP programs, are (unintelligible) children.

They come to us not speaking English. They come to us from some homes of either being on any one of the stages -- one, two or three -- in terms of (unintelligible) work or assistance. But despite of what they've had in terms of experience, they are doing amazingly well.

People say, "Well, it's not that much." It is because what happens with these children and to these families if they were not getting this kinder readiness. And we can see that now, at third-grade levels, they are doing above the norm.

There is more to do; no doubt about it. But 41% of our children have the language other than English as their primary (unintelligible). And we can tell that over 36% of them have (unintelligible).

You could see the statistics there. So I'm just going to go through this really fast. But we know that it's not just LAUP. It is working with those communities. It is working with those providers and with the partnerships.

The partnership with the Hispanic community has been significant to us. We have been fortunate that we have (unintelligible), there's a (unintelligible). And we have gone through their doors and they've come to ours, where they called upon us and we called upon them, and in addition to our strategic partnerships that you see that now have been created over time and it has taken us eight or nine years to do this, but you know that they call upon us.

We recently -- and I'll go to the next slide -- picked up a national campaign to address that 30 million (unintelligible) that we begin to see with four-years-olds in very poor families. We want to make sure that parents have a simple tool and caregivers, that talking is critical in terms of language skills.

And we have shared this now nationally. And we are literally giving it away. And people aren't asking for copies and (unintelligible) charging for the cost of the printing of the (unintelligible) digital copies.

We know the importance of kinder readiness. And we know that life doesn't start at preschool. We have been doing this for over ten years and we see a big difference. We have focused our priorities in terms of the (unintelligible) population now in the last three years.

We have more ways to go but I am so happy to be a partner of the White House Initiative. And thank you to the Department of Ed and to the vision of this administration and our president who sees that it's about all children, not just some children. So I'll stop there.

Alejandra Ceja: Thank you so much, Celia, for your leadership and your support. And this is - your presentation is really a great example, the implementation that - effective implementation we're seeing with federal funds and just in executing and creating the awareness and the sense of urgency for why we need to continue to pay attention and invest in early learning. So I really want to just thank you for your presentation and your leadership. At this time I'd like to ask the operator if she can open up the queue for some - for our Q&A session?

Coordinator: Thank you so much. And a reminder to our audio participants, to ask a question, kindly press star 1. One moment for our first question. Again, a reminder, to ask a question, please press star 1. We have a question in queue. One moment, please? First question is from (Karen Nameth). Ma'am, your line is open.

(Karen Nameth): Thank you. That was a wonderful description of all the great things that are happening with LAUP. And (unintelligible), I was wondering if you could talk a little more about, does this support you also for your bilingual parent professionals like the teacher assistants in classrooms that can be such wonderful language resources that we often don't hear them included in the initiatives for highly-qualified teachers or professional development? And you might have some answers about that that we can learn from.

Celia Ayala: Yes. So we have, for all of our teachers, we have a teacher-training institute. And we brought in, you know, experts in the field of language acquisition for dual language learners that provide a series of trainings for our teachers. And then they go in and implement and come back.

But then we also work with our community colleges to ensure that they are addressing and they're training the workforce in terms of dual language

learners. And we do work with other institutions like the LA County Office of Education.

(Unintelligible) to ensure that addressing the need of the children in differentiated instruction is something that is critical to the child development portion of it but also to the professional development of the staff. So yes, we do incorporate it. And, when we do orientations, that's one of the pieces that we talk about on a regular basis.

(Karen Nameth): Thank you.

Coordinator: Thank you so much. Next question is from (Laura). Ma'am, your line is open.

(Laura Marano): Thank you. This is (Laura Marano) from New Jersey. Hi (Karen). A question for you - can you tell us a little bit more about recruitment and hiring efforts to bring in high-quality teachers into every one of our classrooms?

You certainly talked about partnerships which are critical. I'd like to hear a little bit more about that because that is an area of concern, I would say, and certainly a challenging area here in New Jersey.

Celia Ayala: So one of the best areas for us to recruit is - even within our programs because so many of the parents that start volunteering. And then we guide them to take course work and/or workshop. And they actually become part of our workforce.

The other bigger part for us in terms of the difference that we've seen is at the - what we have with the community college is now - we're trying to get career pathways with a high school. So programs that have either - in California we

call them - they used to be called regional occupational programs. But they're now - they are career pathways.

It's trying to get young people and get what we call the two-plus-two. After two years of college you can begin (unintelligible) courses at the community college. We'd get them into (unintelligible) internship and get them into a paying job that they see as a possibility.

And we have a wonderful workforce development pamphlet that, if you send me an e-mail, I'd be happy to forward you, because it is about a (unintelligible), and it is about constantly going out, and who are the partners that are out there with the megaphones saying, "Early care and education is something we need to get into."

And I know that the Department of Ed and the White House truly are trying to get more people interested in the field. As Libby said, we're going to need - if we're going to do more, we need more and better. So we need to have that big megaphone and - you know, recruiting, training and retaining those people is something that we are constantly aware of.

(Laura Marano): Thank you. I will send you an e-mail.

Celia Ayala: Great.

Coordinator: Thank you. Next question is from Ms. (Cruz). Ma'am, your line is open.

Woman: Hi. I just have a question in regards to licensures. I wanted to know how we could implement these programs here. So (unintelligible) graduate in obtaining licensure?

Celia Ayala: That's a little bit of a difficult question to answer because every state has its own licensing requirement. So if you want to send me an e-mail, and I can tell you a little bit more about California.

But we can probably guide you to someone that could get you information. I wouldn't want to misinform you. But those are very specific criteria. But send me an e-mail and I'll try and refer you to a good resource.

Woman: Thank you. We'll do that. Thank you very much.

Alejandra Ceja: Operator, I think we have time for one more question. Are there any more in the queue?

Coordinator: Again, a reminder, to ask a question, please press star 1. And that's the last question in queue at this time.

Alejandra Ceja: Great. Thank you so much. Libby, Celia, thank you so much for your leadership, for being champions on early learning. I want to remind folks on the phone that the copy of the presentations and the audio will be available on our Web site.

I want to thank our presenters and, most of all, thank you all for taking a time out of your day to participate with us. We will be in touch soon to share with you the theme and details for our next monthly webinar. And I hope that you will be able to join us as well. So we want to - and, with that, we will - thank you and we look forward to having you join us at our next webinar. Have a great day.

Coordinator: That concludes today's conference. Thank you for your participation. You may now disconnect.

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